

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

The following paragraph replaces the paragraph on Page 2, line 12 to Page 3, line 8.

There are two basic technologies for the "first stage" purification of crude acetonitrile co-product produced during the manufacture of acrylonitrile. These processes typically produce acetonitrile of sufficient purity for use as a bulk solvent. The first and most common practiced technology is a batch process. In this process, crude acetonitrile is distilled to remove the bulk of the HCN as a low boiling distillate. Then the remaining material is allowed to react either with a mixture of strong base, usually sodium hydroxide and formaldehyde and water, or with a strong base and ferrous sulfate, to remove essentially all the remaining HCN ~~ACN~~. (See U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,328,075 and 3,201,451.) The HCN free material is then distilled to produce an acetonitrile/water azeotrope containing about 25% water, which in turn is then slurried with anhydrous calcium chloride to remove the bulk of the water in the azeotrope and produce an acetonitrile/water mixture containing about 3 to 5% water. This mixture is then distilled to produce acetonitrile product having an acceptable purity for many uses. Typically, this material contains several parts per million by weight of acrylonitrile or other impurities which absorb strongly in the UV spectrum.